



This population consists of 50+ year olds recently diagnosed with HIV, as well as those who were diagnosed earlier in life and are now 50 or older and living with the disease. The number of older persons living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) has been increasing in recent years due to: 1) the increasing number of new HIV disease diagnoses among older persons; and 2) the effectiveness of highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART), which is prolonging the lives of HIV-infected persons (CDC, 2008).

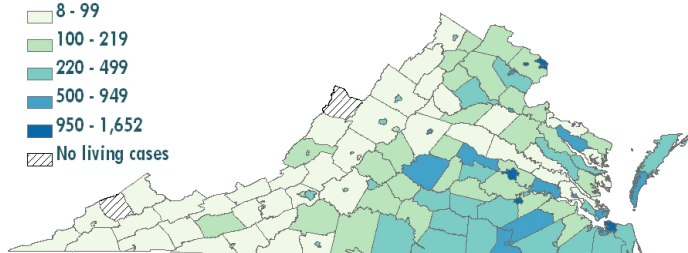
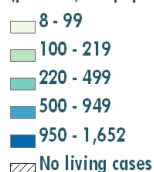
Older Americans may face more problems than younger people. First, they know less about HIV/AIDS as doctors are less likely to bring up HIV prevention methods and the importance of getting tested. In addition, older PLWHAs may be facing other health problems such as high blood pressure and diabetes. It is important to be aware of these challenges and promote prevention, timely testing, and care services for this population (NIA, 2009).

HIV/AIDS PREVALENCE

Among those living with HIV/AIDS in Virginia at the end of 2009, 37% were 50 or older and 57% of those individuals had progressed to AIDS. The prevalence rate of HIV disease among older Virginians was 343 per 100,000; the rate of HIV among females was similar to the HIV prevalence rate among all women, but the rate among males in the 50+ age group was slightly higher at 579 per 100,000 versus 422 per 100,000 for all males. The prevalence rate among Blacks was eight times that of Whites, with the rates among Black females and males 20 and seven times higher than that of their White counterparts, respectively.

Prevalence of HIV Disease among Older PLWHAs, 2009

Rate of persons (aged 50+) living with HIV disease
(per 100,000 population)



HIV DISEASE DIAGNOSES

From 2005-2009, persons 50 and older accounted for approximately 15.5% of new HIV disease diagnoses in Virginia. Males represented more than 70% of this group, and 62% of cases were among non-Hispanic Blacks.

By Race/Ethnicity

Blacks represented the majority of new cases among this age group: 53% of total diagnoses among males and 82% among females. Non-Hispanic Whites corresponded to 32% and Hispanics of all races to 4% of the total number of new HIV disease diagnoses.

Similar to other age groups, there are racial/ethnic disparities in diagnoses among this older population. In 2009, the likelihood of being diagnosed with HIV disease among persons 50 and older was 9 times as high among Blacks and almost 4 times as high among Hispanics compared to Whites.

By Transmission Risk[^]

Among males aged 50+ and newly diagnosed with HIV disease, 63% were men having sex with men (MSM) or MSM with a history of injection drug use (MSM-IDU); 20% were attributed to heterosexual transmission and 16% to IDU. New cases among females were mostly attributed to heterosexual transmission (92%) and IDU (17%).

REFERENCES

CDC HIV/AIDS Topics. (February 2008). "Persons Aged 50 and Older." Accessed August 2011: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/over50/index.htm>

National Institute on Aging. (March 2009). "HIV, AIDS, and Older People." Accessed September 2011: <http://www.nia.nih.gov/healthinformation/publications/hiv-aids.htm>

[^]These data are not actual cases; the percentages presented are estimates of the transmission category using the CDC provided multiple imputation procedure for cases reported without an identified or reported risk.